

INFO OCT-01 55-14 ISO-00 NSCE-00 INR-05 IIR-00 SSO-00
NA-02 10-06 1-01 PM-03 CIAE-00 SP-02 DOD-00
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O 251828Z OCT 78
FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8034

SECTION 1 OF 2 BUENOS AIRES 8473.

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2
TAGS: PFOR, SHUM
SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR'S MEETING WITH GENERAL VIOLA

1. YESTERDAY EVENING (OCT 24) AT 1500 HRS AT HIS OFFICE, I MET WITH GENERAL VIOLA, PRESIDENT OF JUNTA, AND DISCUSSED FOLLOWING TOPICS IN THE FOLLOWING ORDER:

2. HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION: I CONGRATULATED VIOLA FOR GOA'S ANNOUNCEMENT OF IAHRC INVITATION TO VISIT ARGENTINA DURING SECOND QUARTER OF '79. HE WAS GRINNING FROM EAR TO EAR AND QUITE BOUNCY COMPARED TO HIS USUAL LETHARGIC SELF. HE EXPLAINED HIS HIGHLY PUBLICIZED TRIP TO VENEZUELA WAS MOST SUCCESSFUL. VIOLA EMPHASIZED IAHRC VISIT WAS HIS NUMBER ONE PRIORITY AS PERSUADING ARMY HARD-LINERS HAD BEEN NO EASY TASK. HE MADE IT CLEAR TO ME THE BALL WAS NOW IN THEIR COURT. NOW IT WAS UP TO THEM TO CLEAR THE COURT FOR IAHRC. HE STRESSED HE INTENDED TO DO IT.

3. TLATELOCO TREATY: I EXPLAINED TO VIOLA THAT DURING HIS ABSENCE A USG NUCLEAR TEAM HAD MET WITH COUNTERPARTS IN B.A. HE IMMEDIATELY TOOK OVER CONVERSATION BY STATING HE WAS ALARMED BY ADMIRAL CASTRO MADERO'S ALLEGED PUBLIC STATEMENTS. HE SHOOK HIS HEAD STATING HE CONSIDERED CASTRO MADERO A SENSIBLE AND GOOD OFFICER. I TOLD VIOLA THESE NEGATIVE STATEMENTS ADDED FUEL TO THE FIRE AND WERE NOT IN THE BEST INTEREST OF BOTH GOVERNMENTS. I REMINDED VIOLA OF MY HAVING BEEN IN ARGENTINA FOR ALMOST ONE YEAR AND ALL THIS TIME I HAVE BEEN PROMISED TLATELOCO'S RATIFICATION. I ALSO REMINDED HIM SECRETARY VANCE, DEPUTY SECRETARY NEWSOM AND ASST. SECT. TODMAN HAD ALL RECEIVED SAME COMMITMENT. THIS WAS GETTING TO BE A POINT OF EMBARRASSMENT TO ALL OF US. I EXPLAINED IF SOME IMPEDIMENT EXISTED WE SHOULD KNOW ABOUT IT. VIOLA SAID NO PROBLEMS EXISTED AND IT WAS ALL ATTRIBUTED TO BUREAUCRATIC BUNGLING. HE TOOK NOTES AND SAID HE WOULD BE TAKING MATTER UP SOON WITH PRESIDENT VIDELA AND URGE TREATY'S RATIFICATION.

4. NUCLEAR COOPERATION: VIOLA WAS TOLD BY ME USG WANTED TO FULLY COOPERATE WITH GOA IN ALL PHASES OF NUCLEAR FIELD. HE SEEMED TO ACCEPT THIS STATEMENT IN GOOD FAITH AND RESPONDED BY SAYING IT WAS IN HIS COUNTRY'S BEST INTEREST TO WORK WITH USG. HE STATED GOA'S WHOLE DILEMMA AND CONCERN WAS BRAZIL'S UNWILLINGNESS TO ABIDE BY THE SAME RULES.

5. MARIA SUSANA PANERO: IMMEDIATELY ON MENTIONING TO VIOLA THE IMPORTANCE OF LIBERATION OF MARIA SUSANA PANERO, HE EXPLAINED HIS INABILITY TO MONITOR THIS CASE DURING THE LAST TEN DAYS DUE TO HIS ABSENCE FROM ARGENTINA. HE APPEARED FAMILIAR WITH THE CASE AND STATED TO HIS KNOWLEDGE THE CASE WAS ON COURSE. VIOLA TOLD ME ALL HIS INFORMATION INDICATED SUSANA PANERO WOULD IN ALL PROBABILITY BE RELEASED SOON. I REMINDED HIM DATE OF ELIGIBILITY FOR RIGHT OF OPTION WAS TOWARDS END OF NOVEMBER.

6. ADMIRAL MASSERA: STRANGE AS IT SEEMS, VIOLA INQUIRED IF

ADMIRAL MASSERA WAS IN TOWN. HE WAS NOT BEING NAIVE BUT VERY CYNICAL AS HE HAD DIABOLICAL SMILE WHEN HE MADE THIS TRY. HE EXPLAINED HE INQUIRED AND HAD LOST TRACK OF MASSERA'S ACTIVITIES IN VIEW OF HIS VENEZUELAN TRIP. I EXPLAINED TO VIOLA THAT MASSERA'S VISIT IN THE DEPARTMENT HAD BEEN LIMITED TO ASST. SECT. VAKY. I STATED RUMORS WERE COMING STRONG FROM EUROPEAN SOURCES OF A POSSIBLE MASSERA INTERVIEW WITH FRENCH PRESIDENT. VIOLA CONFIRMED TALKING TO MASSERA IN BUENOS AIRES BEFORE HE DEPARTED FOR VENEZUELA, SO WAS ASSUMING MASSERA WAS STILL IN ARGENTINA. VIOLA SAID HE HAD ALSO HEARD RUMORS OF MASSERA-FRENCH PRESIDENT MEETING. VIOLA ALSO SAID HE HAD HEARD FRENCH NUNS AFFAIR WOULD BE DISCUSSED BY THEM. I SAID RUMORS IMPLIED REVELATION WOULD BE MADE BY MASSERA OF NUNS WHEREABOUTS, IF ANY. AT THIS POINT, VIOLA BRISTLED BY SAYING "IF MASSERA HAS ANY NEWS OF FRENCH NUNS HE BETTER INFORM HIS GOVERNMENT FIRST". VIOLA SEEMED QUITE UPSET OVER MASSERA RUMOR, SO I DEEMED IT WISE TO CHANGE SUBJECT.

7. PODER EJECUTIVO NACIONAL: I COMPLIMENTED VIOLA OVER THE APPARENT REDUCTION OF ARRESTS UNDER PEN. HE EXPLAINED AN EFFORT WAS BEING MADE TO USE PEN LESS AND RESORT TO CHURCH MORE. I MENTIONED TO VIOLA OF MY PARTICIPATION IN THE JUDICIAL REFORM CONFERENCE HELD LAST WEEK IN MAR DEL PLATA. I TOLD VIOLA OF MY LONG SESSIONS WITH DR. GABRIELLI, PRESIDENT OF ARGENTINE SUPREME COURT, AND ALSO WITH OTHER MEMBERS OF PROVINCIAL SUPREME COURTS. I TOLD HIM OF MY PERCEPTION FROM ARGENTINE JUDGES OF THE DESIRE TO ENFORCE WRITS OF HABEAS CORPUS AND LEY DE AMPARO WITH MORE VIGOR. I EXPLAINED FEELING AMONG JUDICIARY WAS ONE OF ATTAINMENT OF INDEPENDENCE FROM EXECUTIVE POWER. VIOLA SAID THE JUNTA IS WILLING TO RETURN TO THE "RULE OF LAW" AND IS PUSHING IT, BUT HE CLARIFIED THERE WERE STILL SOME HOLD-OUTS IN THE RANKS.

8. RIGHT OF OPTION: "CHRISTMAS SEASON IS THE TIME TO BE CHARITABLE". WITH THESE INTRODUCTORY WORDS, I SUGGESTED TO VIOLA IT WAS IMPORTANT THAT RIGHT OF OPTION PROGRAM BEGIN TO WORK. VIOLA APOLOGIZED FOR RIGHT OF OPTION NOT FUNCTIONING PROPERLY BUT ADDED BEAGLE CHANNEL MATTER WAS SAPPING MOST OF THEIR EFFORTS. HE SAID HE WOULD AGAIN DISCUSS MATTER WITH GENERAL MARGUINDEGUY. I MADE IT KNOWN USG IS ANXIOUS, READY AND WILLING TO MOVE FULL STEAM AHEAD. I EXPLAINED WE COULD

ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)

U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/IPS

Margaret P. Grafeld, Director

(X) Release () Excise () Deny

Exemption(s):

Declassify: () In Part (X) In Full

() Classify as () Extend as () Downgrade to

Date _____ Declassify on _____ Reason _____

UNCLASSIFIED

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UNCLASSIFIED
OCT-01 55-14 ISO-00 INR-05 INRE-00 550-00 1A-02
IO-06 L-01 PM-03 CIAE-00 SP-02 DODE-00 EUR-08
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SECTION 2 OF 2 BUENOS AIRES 8473

LIMDIS

HELP CLEAN OUT A LARGE NUMBER OF THEIR PEN CASES.

9. MILITARY UNREST: VIOLA WAS TOLD THAT A RELIABLE SOURCE HAD INFORMED ME OF SERIOUS UNREST WITH A LARGE NUMBER OF OFFICERS IN ALL THREE OF THE ARMED FORCES. HE AGREED THERE WAS SOME UNREST BUT NOT SERIOUS. HE ATTRIBUTED THE DISENCHANTMENT TO CURRENT ECONOMIC POLICIES. HE EXPLAINED MAIN DILEMMA WAS THE LOW PAY SCALE, BUT AN EFFORT WOULD BE MADE TO RESOLVE IT.

10. BEAGLE CHANNEL: VIOLA STATED SITUATION WAS SERIOUS, BUT WAS STILL HALF-WAY OPTIMISTIC THAT NEGOTIATIONS WOULD PROVE SUCCESSFUL. DETAILED ANALYSIS OF VIOLA'S VIEWS ON BEAGLE CHANNEL AFFAIR IS SUBJECT OF ANOTHER MESSAGE. SEE BUENOS AIRES 8474.

COMMENT: THROUGHOUT INTERVIEW I RECEIVED FEELING VIOLA WAS QUITE CONFIDENT OF IAHRC VISIT. HE RELIED ON TIME FACTOR. HE FELT THAT INASMUCH AS IAHRC WOULD PROBABLY NOT VISIT ARGENTINA UNTIL MAY OR JUNE 1979 IT WOULD THEN TAKE ANOTHER FOUR OR SIX MONTHS FOR COMMISSION TO SUBMIT ITS REPORT. VIOLA'S RATIONALIZATION WAS THAT A GREAT DEAL OF HOUSE-CLEANING COULD TAKE PLACE WITHIN THAT TIME-SPAN. NO EFFORT WAS MADE BY VIOLA TO HAVE ME BELIEVE ALL WAS PEACHES AND CREAM WITHIN MILITARY UNITS. IT BECAME APPARENT HARD-LINERS FROM ALL THREE ARMED FORCES ARE STILL MAKING VIOLA AND VIDELA'S TASKS DIFFICULT. HE IMPLIED NOW THAT IAHRC VISIT IS NO LONGER AN ISSUE, HARD-LINERS ARE USING DR. MARTINEZ DE HOZ, MINECON, AS THE WHIPPING BOY. OFFICERS, AS WELL AS REGULAR TROOPS, ARE PUTTING THE HEAT ON VIOLA DUE TO LOW PAY SCALE. VIOLA IS OF OPINION THERE IS MERIT TO PROTESTS OVER ECONOMIC ISSUES. HE INDICATED HIS WILLINGNESS TO RECOMMEND MORE ADEQUATE SALARY ADJUSTMENTS TO KEEP THE TROOPS IN LINE. HE NEVER OFFERED ANY INDICATION OF DISMISSING MARTINEZ DE HOZ.

FROM THIS VANTAGE POINT, GENERAL SUAREZ MASON STILL REMAINS THE QUESTION MARK. HE IS THE HARDEST OF ALL HARD-LINERS. IT IS NO SECRET HE IS NO FRIEND OF VIDELA OR VIOLA. WHETHER HE STAYS OR GOES STILL REMAINS UNANSWERED.
CASTRO

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